



Sound Steps

Education Engineering Enforcement for Montgomery County Communities

Montgomery County Department of Transportation
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/walk

Safe Routes to School News

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School Pedestrian Training Underway!

To promote pedestrian safety, Montgomery County's Department of Transportation (MCDOT) Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator led an "It's Academic" style game for 120 middle school students attending the Montgomery County Public Schools Junior Councils' General Assembly in February. The game was developed to appeal to the middle school age group. It helps them better understand how to stay safe and understand the potential consequences of poor pedestrian choices. Most students played with enthusiasm and seemed to enjoy the learning experience.

The game topics covered pedestrian safety facts and the do's and don'ts of pedestrian safety. The groups with the most correct answers won blinking safety lights as a prize.

Another training activity underway is Train the Trainer sessions, where high school students learn how to teach elementary school students to walk safely. These programs are especially important due to the recent return to daylight savings time. Now, more students are walking in darkness during the early morning hours, so stay alert!

For more information or to sponsor the game or training at your school, contact Nadji Kirby at nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov.



A Few Ideas to Help You Enjoy Walking or Biking to School

The weather is changing and we will soon be leaving the winter behind! Consider walking or biking to school to not only enjoy the weather but for fun and exercise. Here are some ideas to help you enjoy your trip!

- Always follow the rules of the road. Talk about why traffic safety is important. Wear helmets when riding bikes, and be sure they fit correctly.
- Practice stopping at intersections, looking left, right, front and behind, listening for traffic, and making eye contact with drivers.
- Find all the traffic signs and roadway markings on your route. Talk about what these words and symbols mean.
- Look at people walking, cycling, driving, and riding in cars. Talk about ways your child can avoid or minimize dangers, along the route, -such as what to do at driveways, or near parked cars.
- Look around- get to know your neighborhood – the people, buildings, animals, landscaping, etc. on your route.

Contact Nadji Kirby, SRTS Coordinator to learn more about these ideas to improve your children's route to school and your neighborhood walkability.



Gear Up for Bike to School Day – May 8, 2013

The event builds on the popularity of Walk to School Day, which is celebrated across the country – and the world – each October. Many communities and schools have been holding spring walk and bicycle to school events for years. National Bike to School Day provides an opportunity for schools across the country to join together to celebrate and build off of the energy of National Bike Month.

For more information, resources, and to sign your school up, please visit <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>.

Mark these dates on your calendar!
Bike to School Day: May 8, 2013
Bike to Work Day: May 17, 2013
Walk to School Day: October 9, 2013



Thank you for reading! Now Pass it on!

This newsletter contains information regarding the Safe Routes to School program, pedestrian and bicycle safety topics, engineering highlights, enforcement, etc. The newsletter is sent to school administrators, teachers, parents, volunteers, and other interested parties. Please feel free to forward to anyone you feel would be interested or please email me their address and I can add them to the list, nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov.

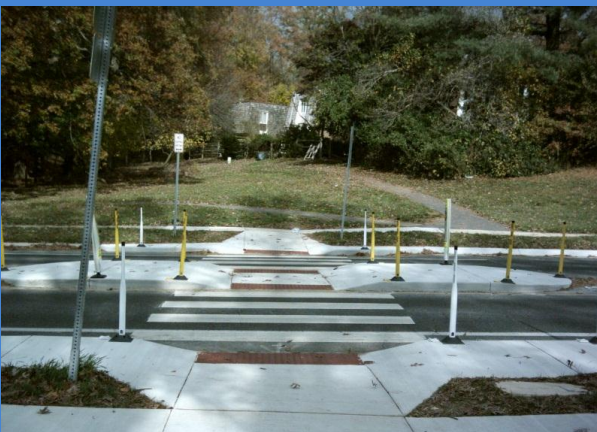
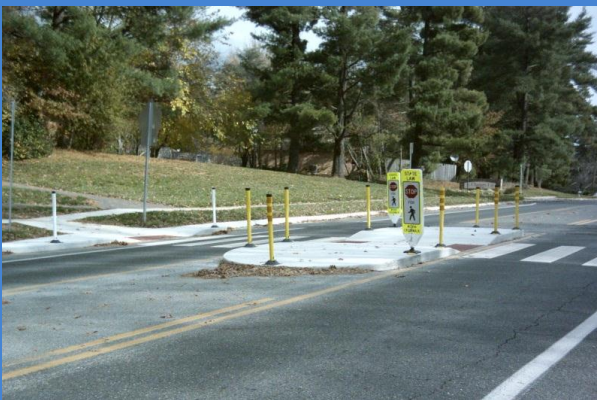
Nadji Kirby, Editor
MCDOT Director's Office

Engineering at Watkins Mill!

At Watkins Mill Elementary School vehicles were parking on or too close to the marked school crosswalk, vehicles were speeding in the school zone during arrival/dismissal times, and parents were making U-turn at the school crosswalk.

As a result, the school crosswalk was relocated slightly southward on Watkins Mill Road (to move the pedestrian activity away from the school driveway), the sidewalk connection from the crosswalk to the on-site sidewalk was improved, plus curb extensions and a pedestrian refuge island were constructed at the school crosswalk.

Now the adult crossing guard and all pedestrians have less roadway width when crossing Watkins Mill Road and a protected area in the middle of the roadway; vehicles are now physically kept back from the crosswalk; the travel lanes appear to be narrower because of the physical features which were constructed, thus slowing vehicular traffic through the school zone; and vehicles are no longer able to make U-turns in close proximity



Calling All Teachers!

Risk Watch is the first comprehensive injury prevention program available for use in schools. Developed by NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) with co-funding from the Lowe's Home Safety Council and in collaboration with a panel of respected safety and injury prevention experts, Risk Watch gives children and their families the skills and assessment they need to create safer homes and communities.

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) is dedicated to the safety and well-being of your students and is committed to teaching children and families in Montgomery County about safety and the prevention of unintentional injuries in the community and in the classroom. To address the safety needs of children in Montgomery County, they offer the nationally acclaimed "Risk Watch" safety program for delivery in the classroom.

Risk Watch is a school-based curriculum, aligned with the State's Standards of Learning that links teachers with community safety experts and parents. The curriculum is divided into five age-appropriate teaching modules (Pre-K/Kindergarten, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4, Grades 5-6, and Grades 7-8), each of which addresses the following topics:

- Bike and Pedestrian Safety
- Fire and Burn Prevention
- Choking, Suffocation, and Strangulation Prevention
- Poisoning Prevention
- Falls Prevention
- Firearms Injury Prevention
- Motor Vehicle Safety
- Water Safety

In addition to classrooms, Risk Watch is available to day care centers, before and after school programs, scout troops, camps and church groups. We love to support your safety efforts in the classroom! For more information, please contact Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service at 240-777-2463.

Safe Routes to School in Montgomery County

Targeted Education and Outreach Programs

Montgomery County's Safe Routes to School program provides safe and active walking and bicycling to and from school. It provides an opportunity to make walking and bicycling safer and more accessible for children, including those with disabilities, as well as to increase the number of children who chose to walk and bike. On a broader level Safe Routes to School can enhance children's health and well-being, ease traffic congestion near schools, improve air quality, and improve community member's overall quality of life.

Montgomery County's Safe Routes to School program is led by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and is supported by the Montgomery County Police Department, Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service, the Maryland Highway Safety Office, and other County and State agencies working to improve student safety. We work collaboratively with schools to develop creative solutions for school related traffic problems.

Montgomery County Department of Transportation – Safe Routes to School

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